



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Cartoon Vultures Teach Utah Kids That “Smoking is a Dangerous Road”

SALT LAKE CITY, Dec. 23, 2002 – Now that Utah kids are home from school on holiday break, many will click on the TV and find an unlikely pair of anti-smoking advocates – cartoon vultures. The Utah Department of Health’s (UDOH) Tobacco Prevention and Control Program (TPCP) is taking advantage of the season’s increased children’s television viewing by launching its first-ever, animated advertising campaign.

The ad, which recently began airing, illustrates the pitfalls of smoking by telling a humorous story from the two vultures’ point of view. The ad is the first of two featuring the vulture characters and ends with the tagline, “Smoking. It’s a dangerous road.”

“This is the first time the TPCP or the UDOH have ever specifically targeted children under 8 years old with mass media messages,” says Jana Kettering, UDOH Director of Public Information. “In addition, this is the first time we have ever used animation for our prevention messages – it was time to break some new ground in our prevention efforts.”

“Children begin smoking at an average age of 12 years,” says Lena Dibble, TPCP Media Liaison. “The sooner we can reach those kids, the more successful we will be in preventing them from using tobacco later in life. We are using a fun way to get a very serious message across.”

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The vulture ad campaign was developed for the TPCP by the Crowell/Love advertising partnership. The campaign’s unique animation style was produced by the Tennessee-based studio, Magnetic Dreams. “The line-drawing style is beneficial and the most economical in animation,” says Dibble. “Full-blown color animation is incredibly expensive. But since that is the style kids have become used to seeing, our black-and-white, line-drawn ads really stand out. In the end, we were able to create a very memorable spot, with fun characters and plot twists, on a limited budget.” The second vulture ad, which builds on the vultures’ story, will begin airing in February.

Editor Note:

Broadcast: Spot dubs are available; however, most local and some cable TV stations are airing the spot and should have a dub for use in the story.

Print: Still shots of the scenes in the ad are available by contacting Cami Rozanas (801) 537-0533 or crozanas@crowelladv.com.

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